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Greatest Of All Times

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Please subdue the anguish of your soul. Nobody is destined only to happiness or to pain. The wheel of life takes one up and down by turn.

— Kalidasa —

AZ QUOTES



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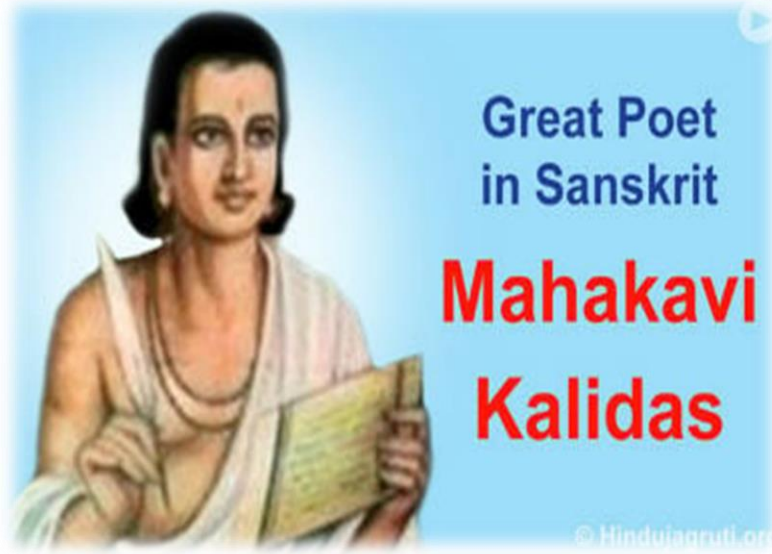


King of Smilies

Mahakavi Kalidas

Greatest Scholar and Poet in Sanskrit

https://www.hindujagruti.org/articles/83_mahakavi-kalidas.html



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Introduction

One of the greatest poets and dramatists in Sanskrit. His chronicle of the kings of the Raghu clan ('Raghuvamsha'), the great play 'Shakuntala' and other works depict, through many great characters, the highest ideals of life as seen by the ancient people of Bharat.

Kalidas

There are hundreds of languages in the world. However, great and classical literature which people in all countries need to read is found only in a few languages. One such great language is Sanskrit. It is one of the oldest languages. It is the mother of several Indian languages such as Hindi, Bengali and Marathi in the North. Kannada, Telugu and other languages in the South have also been nourished by it.

It needs the genius of poets who create literary epics and great thinkers for a language to achieve world-renown. Sanskrit is eminently lucky in this respect. Sages' celebration of the wonders of nature, the sky, the stars, mountains and rivers, the sun, the moon, the clouds, fire ('Agni') and their devout offering of prayers to the Universal Power are all found in the Vedic classics which/are in Sanskrit. Puranas and historical epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharat vividly describe the battle between the good and the evil. They also portray the virtues like devotion to truth, a sense of sacrifice, heroism, cultured living, etc. In Sanskrit there are also beautiful stories of birds and animals like Panchatantra; stories extolling good and basic qualities of wisdom and intelligence. Sanskrit can also justly boast of a rich treasure house of plays, poems and many scientific and philosophical treatises.

A poet who has made a distinct and glorious contribution to this sumptuous Sanskrit literature is Kalidas. He has pictured in his works the beauty in life and pondered upon how we can give pleasure to others by generous and graceful behavior. His portrayals are vivid and heart-warming; his word power is unique. In a few words he is capable of bringing out the entire meaning intended. His writings touchingly show up a noble, meaningful

mode of life for the people to pursue. His works are an intellectual treat to thinkers and common readers alike.

A Great Scholar and Poet

Who is this Kalidas? When did he live and where in India was, he residing? Much discussion has taken place for a long time now about his life and times. Not many queries on this score have elicited definite answers. Several legends have sprouted around him.

According to one such popular legend, Kalidas wasn't always so wise and learned. In fact, there was a time he was considered to be one of the stupidest people in the kingdom!

One sunny day, Kalidas was sitting on a branch of a tree, trying to saw it off. But the dimwitted man was sitting on the wrong end of the branch, so when he finally sawed through the branch, down he tumbled! This act of sheer stupidity was observed by some shrewd pundits minister passing by.

Now these pundits wanted to play a trick on the arrogant princess, to teach her a lesson. She was determined to marry someone who would defeat her in a debate about the scriptures. The princess had heaped considerable abuse on them over a period of time, and they were determined to extract their revenge. So, when they chanced upon Kalidas, they decided to present him to the queen as a suitable match for her.

In order to conceal his stupidity, the pundits asked Kalidas to pretend that he was a great sage, who was observing a vow of silence. Kalidas readily agreed, and they presented him to the queen, saying that Kalidas would only communicate by way of gestures. When the queen asked Kalidas a few questions to test his intelligence, Kalidas gesticulated wildly and the astute pundits 'interpreted' these gestures as extremely witty answers and retorts. The princess was suitably impressed, and the couple was married without much delay.

Kalidas's stupidity could be concealed for only so long, and the night of the wedding Kalidas blurted out something inane. The princess realized that she had married a prize fool. Furious, she threw him out of her palace, and her life.

The dejected Kalidas wandered around, till he came to the bank of the river. He contemplated taking his life when he suddenly saw some women washing clothes on the edge of the river bank. He observed that the stones which the women were pounding with clothes, were smooth and rounded, while the other stones were rough and ragged. This observation hit him like a thunderbolt, and it dawned upon him that if stones could be worn through and change their shape by being pounded upon by clothes, then why couldn't his thick brains change, by being pounded upon by knowledge!

Kalidas thus grew determined to become the wisest and most learned man in the country, and to achieve this end he started indulging in intellectual pastimes, reading, meditating and praying to his goddess Kali to grant him divine knowledge. His wish was fulfilled.

This is one of the most popular legends about Kalidas. There are several other stories but they lack authenticity.

It appears Kalidas was at the court of emperor Vikramaditya. The place and time of this king are also not definite. But it can be said with some certainty that Kalidas lived before the 6th century A.D., i.e., about 1400 years ago. But when exactly he lived before the 6th century is not firmly established. Though a deep affection for the city of Ujjain is discernible in his works, it cannot be said with certainty that he lived there. But we can assume that, wherever he may have been born, he had lived at Ujjain.

Kalidas, however, had good knowledge of the whole of Bharat. In his poem 'Meghaduta', his descriptions of mountains and rivers and cities and villages stretching from Ramagiri in Central India up to Alakanagari in the Himalayas are very beautiful. In another epic poem 'Raghuvamsha', Kalidas, while portraying the conquests of

emperor Raghu, describes the places and peoples, their modes of living, food-habits and trades and professions, rivers and mountains in almost the whole country — Assam, Bengal and Utkal in the East; Pandya and Kerala in the South and Sind, Gandhara and other places in the North-west.

Reading these pen-pictures, one cannot help but conclude that the poet must have had a personal knowledge of these areas. In short, he must have traveled widely across the length and breadth of the land, seen those places, talked to the people and studied their modes of living.

Kalidas possessed that distinct intellect which makes one a great poet. He was a scholar and his works display his poetic genius as well as scholarship. Also they are marked by a belief of what is good in life and people's noble goals of life. He could describe the rich and wealthy life of a royal palace and the serene, simple and peaceful life at a hermitage with equal understanding. He could, likewise, describe the joys of the marital life of a man and his spouse as well as their pangs of separation. He creates scenes of a serious and thoughtful nature as also hilarious scenes of light comedy. In his works is found an excellent combination of art-consciousness, unmatched wordpower and an unparalleled capacity for vivid portrayals.

The Great works by Kalidas

Kalidas wrote seven works. 'Kumarasambhava' and 'Raghuvamsha' are his two epic poems. 'Malavikagnimitra', 'Vikramorvashiya' and 'Abhijnana Shakuntala' are his celebrated plays. 'Meghaduta' and 'Ritusamhara' are also poetical works of great distinction.

Kumarasambhava

One of Kalidas's greatest works is 'Kumarasambhava'. Critics maintain that Kalidas wrote only the first eight chapters of the epic poem. The work describes the marriage of Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati. It begins with a fine description of that giant among mountains, the Himalaya.

Kalidas's poem gives us a vivid picture of what a good, meaningful life a man could and should lead as propounded by our learned ancestors.

Raghuvamsha

Kalidas's second epic is 'Raghuvamsha'. There are nineteen chapters ('sargas') in this poem. The epic describes the history of the kings Dileepa, Raghu, Aja, Dasharatha, Sri Rama, Lava and Kusha. It also deals briefly with the twenty kings from Nala up to Agnivarna. In the beginning, the poet extols the fine qualities of the kings of Raghu dynasty.

'Raghuvamsha' depicts our ancient, historical culture and tradition. Our ancestors had discussed in detail about such matters as to who could be a good ruler, who is a man of 'tapas' (penance), how one should lead a good, purposeful life and the like. The poet has portrayed diverse characters like Vashishta, Dileepa, Raghu, Aja and others. Agnivarna is an example of a king who could be termed as 'depraved'.

Malavikagnimitra

'Malavikagnimitra' is Kalidas's first play. The author shows his humility and is uncertain whether people would accept play. He pleads 'Puranamityeva Na sadhu sarvam, Na chapikavyamnavamityavadyam' (Everything old is not good, nor is every thing new badly). There may be some thing, which may not be of much use in the old, and the new may also be good. The theme of the play is the love-story of Agnimitra and Malavika.

Vikramor-vashiya

Kalidas's second play 'Vikramor -vashiya' is about the loves and tribulations of king Pururava and the heavenly damsel 'Urvashi'.

Abhijnana Shakuntala

'Abhijnana Shakuntala' is Kalidas's greatest creation. This literary masterpiece has been translated into several languages around the world. The story of Shakuntala appears in the 'Adiparva' chapter of the epic Mahabharat.

Meghaduta

'Meghaduta' is a beautiful love-lyric. A 'Yaksha', who is forced to be separated from his mistress for a year, sends her a message. The lady is residing at Alakanagari. 'Go and tell her that I told so', instructs the Yaksha to the cloud who becomes his messenger. The very fact that a cloud ('Megha') is chosen to be a messenger of love is something unique. The poet fascinatingly describes the travels of the cloud from Ramagiri to Alakanagari. The rivers, hills and mountains, cities and towns, vast fields, farmers' daughters as well as girls in the cities, the birds and the bees — are all described by the poet vividly. It is a total picture of a beautiful world. His descriptions of Alakanagari, the Yaksha's house and the garden around, the Yaksha's wife playing the Veena and her grace and beauty are captivating.

Ritusamhara

'Ritusamhara' is a somewhat small-scale poetical creation depicting the six seasons. However, it is equally appealing. The poet here sees beauty in everything. Each different facet of nature he sees in each of the seasons fascinates him; it is a romantic sight.


Summary of the life and work of Kalidas

In sum, it gives us great aesthetic pleasure to read Kalidas's works. His descriptions enthrall us. With him we are in the company of a highly civilized, cultured personality. It is like a flower which, in bloom, spreads its fragrance all around. And a man's mature, ripened mind and intellect brings pleasure to those around him. In Kalidas's creations, we enter the world of people pure in mind and body and who are graceful. We learn here the manner in which man's nature can reach high, moral levels. It pleases us deeply to come into contact with characters like Parvati, Dileepa, Raghu, Aja, Shakuntala, Dushyanta and Kanva. It is for this wonderful experience that we as well as people in other countries read Kalidas.

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Mahakavi Kalidas (1966 film)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahakavi_Kalidas_\(1966_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahakavi_Kalidas_(1966_film))

<i>Mahakavi Kalidas</i>	
	
Theatrical release poster	
Directed by	R. R. Chandran
Written by	Ku. Ma. Balasubramaniam
Produced by	R. R. Chandran
Starring	Sivaji Ganesan
Cinematography	R. R. Chandran
Edited by	P. V. Narayanan
Music by	K. V. Mahadevan
Production company	Kalpana Kala Mandhir
Distributed by	Sivaji Films
Release date	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">19 August 1966</div>
Running time	143 minutes
Country	India
Language	Tamil

Mahakavi Kalidas (transl. *The Great Poet Kalidas*) is a 1966 Indian [Tamil-language biographical film](#) produced and directed by R. R. Chandran, starring [Sivaji Ganesan](#). It is based on the life of the poet [Kalidasa](#). The film was released on 19 August 1966.

Cast

- [Sivaji Ganesan](#) as Chinnaiah / [Kalidas](#)

- [Sowcar Janaki](#) as Princess Sangeetha Vani / Vilasavathi
- [R. Muthuraman](#) as King Boja
- [L. Vijayalakshmi](#) as Mohanangi
- [S. V. Sahasranamam](#) (guest role)
- [R. S. Manohar](#) as Ambarisan
- [V. K. Ramasamy](#) as Konar
- [Nagesh](#) as Oviyar (guest role)
- [A. Karunanidhi](#) as Suppan
- [C. K. Saraswathi](#) as Chinnaiah's mother
- [K. B. Sundarambal](#) as [Kali](#)
- [E. R. Sahadevan](#) as King
- Usilaimani as Poet
- [Karuppu Subbiah](#) as Poet
- [Karikol Raju](#) as Barber
- C. S. Pandian
- S. V. Sivanandham
- [G. Sakunthala](#)
- M. S. Malathi
- P. K. Vijayarani

Soundtrack

Music was composed by [K. V. Mahadevan](#). The "Sakunthalai" music drama was not included in the film but was released on gramophone record.

Song	Singer/s	Lyricist	Length
"Senru Vaa Magane"	K. B. Sundarambal	Kannadasan	
"Kaalathil Azhiyaada"			3.15
"Kuzhandhaiyin Kodugal Oviyama .. Kalaimagal Enakoru"	T. M. Soundararajan & P. Susheela		
"Kallaayi Vandhavan Kadavulamma"	T. M. Soundararajan		03:35
"Maanikka Veenaiye...Yaar Tharuvar"			03:00
"Malarum Vaan Nilavum"			
"Chinnaiya Endrazhaitha"			
"Thangame Thaamarai Mottukalaagi"		Ku. Ma. Balasubramaniam	
"Pann Patta Nenjile Punn Pattadho"			
"Piraputtren Kaaliyidam"			

"Ariyaadha Maandhargale"			
"Deivathin Avadhaara Idhikaasa"	K. B. Sundarambal		
"Malarum Vaan Nilavum"	P. Susheela		
"Maamunivan Kaushikane Thavam Purindhan" "Sakunthalai" music drama	T. M. Soundararajan, P. Susheela, S. V. Ponnusamy & Soolamangalam Rajalakshmi		

Reception

Kalki praised the film for its songs and cast performances.

[Kindly visit the Web Link to view the FILM](#)

மகாகவி காளிதாஸ் (1966) | Mahakavi Kalidas Full Movie Tamil | Sivaji Ganesan | Sowcar Janaki

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NEmOhnYOlw> [2:33:35]

Directed by R. R. Chandran

Written by Ku. Ma. Balasubramaniam

Produced by R. R. Chandran

Starring: Sivaji Ganesan, Sowcar Janaki, R. Muthuraman,
L. Vijayalakshmi

Cinematography by R. R. Chandran

Edited by P. V. Narayanan

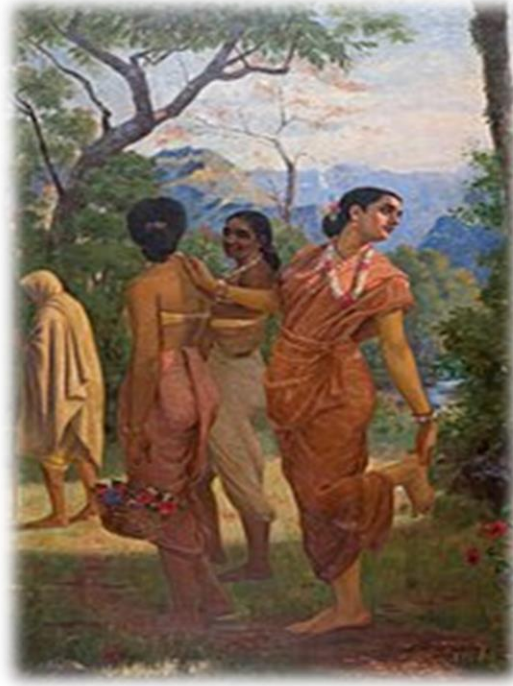
Music by K. V. Mahadevan

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Distributed by Sivaji Films

Release date: 19 August 1966

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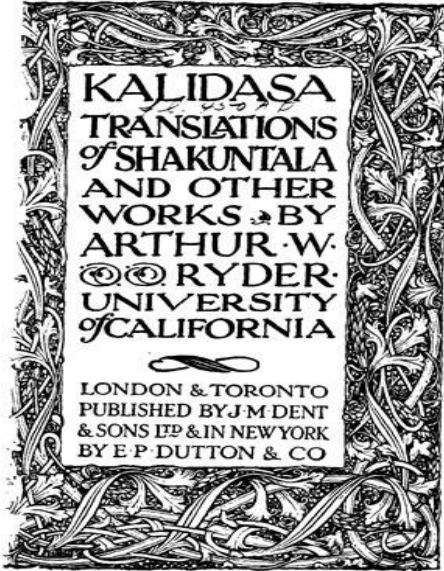


Śakuntalā stops to look back at Duṣyanta,
by Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906).

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Translations of Shakuntala and Other Works

- Arthur W. Ryder (translator) .Kalidasa (author)



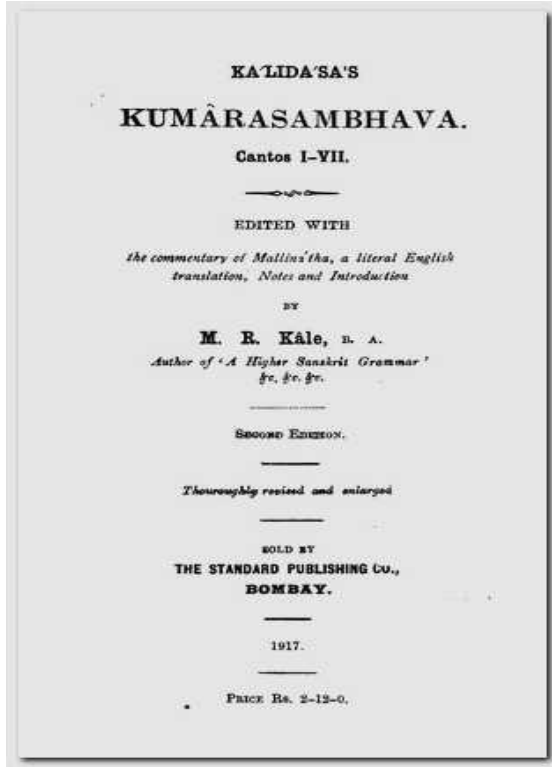
A collection of Sanskrit plays by Kalidasa who influenced late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century European literature. His work is noted for its portrayal of the unity of duty to one's family, religion, and society and the normative role of nature in the human world. His characters constantly make choices to uphold obligations to the institutions of faith, kin, and country in the face of terrible ethical dilemmas, thereby illustrating the ideal of virtue.

Visit the Web Link for complete article:

https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/ryder-translations-of-shakuntala-and-other-works#lf0307_head_001

Complete Works of Kalidasa

<https://www.sanskritebooks.org/2011/06/complete-works-of-kalidasa/>



Works of Kalidasa:

Plays – There are three plays, the earliest of which is probably the Malavikaagnimitra (Malavikaa and Agnimitra), a work concerned with palace intrigue. It is of special interest because the hero is a historical figure, King Agnimitra, whose father, Pushhpamitra, wrested the kingship of northern India from the Mauryan king Brihadratha about 185 B.C. and established the Sunga dynasty, which held power for more than a century. The Vikramorvashiiya (Urvashii Won Through Valor) is based on the old legend of the love of the mortal Pururavaas for the heavenly damsel Urvashii. The legend occurs in embryonic form in a hymn of the Rig Veda and in a much amplified version in the ShatapathabrahmaNa.

The third play, AbhiGYaanashaakuntala (Shakuntalaa Recognized by the Token Ring), is the work by which Kaalidaasa is best known not only in India but throughout the world. It was the first work of Kaalidaasa to be translated into English from which was made a German translation in 1791 that evoked the often quoted admiration by Goethe. The raw material for this play, which usually is called in English simply Shaakuntala after the name of the heroine, is contained in the Mahaabhaarata and in similar form also in the PadmapuraaNa, but these versions seem crude and primitive when compared with Kaalidaasa's polished and refined treatment of the story. In bare outline the story of the play is as follows: King Dushhyanta, while on a hunting expedition, meets the hermit-girl Shakuntalaa, whom he marries in the hermitage by a ceremony of mutual consent. Obligated by affairs of state to return to his palace, he gives Shakuntalaa his signet ring, promising to send for her later. But when Shakuntalaa comes to the court for their reunion, pregnant with his child, Dushhyanta fails to acknowledge her as his wife because of a curse. The spell is subsequently broken by the discovery of the ring, which Shakuntalaa had lost on her way to the court. The couple are later reunited, and all ends happily.

The influence of the AbhiGYaanashaakuntala outside India is evident not only in the abundance of translations in many languages, but also in its adaptation to the operatic stage by Paderewski, Weingartner, and Alfano.

Poems – In addition to these three plays Kalidasa wrote two long epic poems, the Kumarasambhava (Birth of Kumara) and the Raghuvamsha (Dynasty of Raghu). The former is concerned with the events that lead to the marriage of the god Shiva and Paarvatii, daughter of the Himalayas.

This union was desired by the gods for the production of a son, Kumara, god of war, who would help them defeat the demon, Taraka. The gods induce Kama, god of love, to discharge an amatory arrow at Siva who is engrossed in meditation. Angered by this interruption of his austerities, he burns Kama to ashes with a glance of his third eye. But love for Paarvatii has been aroused, and it culminates in their marriage.

The Raghuvamsha treats of the family to which the great hero Rama belonged, commencing with its earliest antecedents and encapsulating the principal events told in the Raamaayana of Valmiki. But like the Kumarasambhava, the last nine cantos of which are clearly the addition of another poet, the Raghuvamsha ends rather abruptly, suggesting either that it was left unfinished by the poet or that its final portion was lost early.

Finally there are two lyric poems, the Meghaduta (Cloud Messenger) and the Ritusamhara (Description of the Seasons). The latter, if at all a genuine work of Kalidasa, must surely be regarded as a youthful composition, as it is distinguished by rather exaggerated and overly exuberant depictions of nature, such as are not elsewhere typical of the poet. It is of tangential interest, however, that the Ritusamhara, published in Bengal in 1792, was the first book to be printed in Sanskrit.

On the other hand, the Meghaduta, until the 1960's hardly known outside India, is in many ways the finest and most perfect of all Kalidasa's works and certainly one of the masterpiece of world literature. A short poem of 111 stanzas, it is founded at once upon the barest and yet most original of plots. For some unexplained dereliction of duty, a Yaksha, or attendant of Kubera, god of wealth, has been sent by his lord into yearlong exile in the mountains of central India, far away from his beloved wife on Mount Kailasa in the Himalayas. At the opening of the poem, particularly distraught and hapless at the onset of the rains when the sky is dark and gloomy with clouds, the yaksha opens his heart to a cloud hugging close the mountain top. He requests it mere aggregation of smoke, lightning, water, and wind that it is, to convey a message of consolation to his beloved while on its northward course. The Yaksha then describes the many captivating sights that are in store for the cloud on its way to the fabulous city of Alakaa, where his wife languishes amid her memories of him. Throughout the Meghaduta, as perhaps nowhere else so plentifully in Kalidasa's works, are an unvarying freshness of inspiration and charm, delight imagery and fancy, profound insight into the emotions, and a oneness with the phenomena of nature. Moreover, the fluidity and beauty of the language are probably unmatched in Sanskrit literature, a feature all the more remarkable for its inevitable loss in translation.

Note:

Kindly visit the Web Link:

<https://www.sanskritebooks.org/2011/06/complete-works-of-kalidasa/>

{DOWNLOAD LINKS TO COMPLETE WORKS OF KALIDASA}

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Kalidasa

Ancient India History Notes

<https://prepp.in/news/e-492-kalidasa-ancient-india-history-notes>

Kalidasa was an ancient Indian poet and dramatist who wrote in **Classical Sanskrit**. The Vedas, the **Ramayaa**, the **Mahabharata**, and the Puranas are the main sources for his plays and poetry. Three plays, two epic poems, and two shorter poems are the only works he left behind. Except for what can be deduced from his poetry and plays, very little is known about his life. Although his works cannot be precisely dated, they were most likely written before the fifth century CE. This article will explain to you the **Kalidasa** which will be helpful in Ancient History preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

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Kalidasa

- **Kalidasa** (active late 4th-early 5th century) was a brilliant poet and playwright in classical India.
- He unveiled the essence of a whole civilization by demonstrating the expressive and provocative heights to which the **Sanskrit language is capable**.
- Kalidasa was a major literary figure in the first half of the seventh century, clearly after the great **Buddhist poet Asvaghosha** (1st century) (the Aihole inscription, 634).
- Outside of India, scholars agree that **Kalidasa** thrived under the reign of **Chandragupta II**.
- According to **Hindu mythology**, he embellished Vikramaditya's court in the first century B.C.
- **Kalidasa** was a court poet of a king named **Vikramaditya**, according to several ancient and medieval sources.

- Around the first century BCE, a mythological monarch named **Vikramaditya** is claimed to have ruled from **Ujjain**.
- According to some researchers, the mythical **Vikramaditya** is not a historical character at all.
- **Other monarchs** who reigned from **Ujjain** and used the title **Vikramaditya** the most famous of whom are **Chandragupta II** and **Yasodharman**.
- The most widely held belief is that **Kalidasa** flourished during the reign of **Chandragupta II**, and thus lived in the 4th to 5th centuries CE.

Kalidasa - Early life

- **Himalayas, Ujjain, and Kalinga:** Scholars say that Kalidasa resided near the Himalayas, in the Ujjain area, and in Kalinga.
- **Kashmir: Lakshmi Dhar Kalla** (1891–1953), a Sanskrit scholar and Kashmiri Pandit, determined that Kalidasa was born in Kashmir but traveled south to seek assistance from local kings.
- **Saffron plant**, deodar trees, musk deer, tams, glades, and other flora, animal, and topographical traits typical to Kashmir but not Ujjain or Kalinga are among the evidence listed in **Kalidasa's works**.
- Reference to Kashmiri traditions, such as the Kashmiri literature **Nilamata Purana**, which is cited in **Shakuntala Nikumbh**.
- According to some experts, Kalidasa was born in Uttarakhand's Garhwal region.

Kalidasa - Literary works

- There are six key works that are significant.
- **Kumarasambhava** (Birth of Kumara; **Kumara**, the Prince, was Siva's war-god son) is an epic poem that openly tells the heavenly romance that led to Siva's son's birth.
- The **Raghuvamsa** is another epic poem that honors Rama's origins and existence.
- **Kalidasa's** excellent distillation and modulation of the Valmiki Ramayana may be seen in the cantos dedicated to Rama.
- **Meghaduta**, a lyric "elegy" by **Kalidasa**, is a brief yet remarkable work that demonstrates another side of **Kalidasa's talent**.
- This masterwork narrates the story of an exiled demi divinity who, worried for his bride's safety, contracts a monsoon thunderhead to deliver word of his safety to her in the north.

- This book is the birthplace of a thriving genre in Sanskrit and allied Indic literature.
- **Kalidasa's** three dramas aren't very original in terms of love stories, but the author's command of language, setting, and detail is exceptional.
- Despite the fact that the **Malavikagnimitra** is thought to be Kalidasa's first play, it is not a young work. Because of the story, it is less rewarding than the others.
- The theme of the human king's love for the celestial nymph in the **Vikramorvasiya** has more potential for high sorrow and even tragedy, and Kalidasa, for the most part, exploits it.
- **Sakuntala** is India's most renowned heroine, appearing in **Abhijnanasakuntalam**.
- The **Mahabharata** contains the template, but Kalidasa created the magnificent **Sakuntala**.
- This drama is justifiably **Kalidasa's most famous**, for here poetry and drama become inextricably linked.
- **Order, delicacy, tranquillity, cohesiveness**, and balance are all present.
- It's fitting that this was the first literary work to introduce **India to Europe** in the contemporary period.
- This drama, crafted by the culture's greatest representative and poet, encapsulated everything that **Sanskritic culture** was, its celebration of the real, and its idea of itself.
- **Ritusamhaara** was another excellent lyric poem he penned, this one about the seasons.

Significance of Literary works

- The **civilization** depicted in **Kalidasa's literature** is that of a courtly nobility confident in its own power and dignity.
- More than any other author, **Kalidasa** has done more to reconcile the ancient **Brahmanic religious** tradition, particularly its ceremonial concentration with Sanskrit, with the demands of a new and brilliant **secular Hinduism**.
- The synthesis, which exemplifies the **Gupta period's** renaissance, did not, however, sustain its frail social foundation; with the chaos that followed the Gupta Empire's collapse, **Kalidasa** became a memory of perfection that neither Sanskrit nor the Indian nobility would ever know again.
- He also studied books on rhetoric and **theatrical theory**, disciplines that Hindu savants have approached with tremendous, though occasionally baffling, skill.
- **Kalidasa** possessed both sophisticated and intricate philosophical theories, as well as understanding of astronomy and law.

Conclusion

Kalidasa was a Sanskrit poet and dramatist who is often regarded as the greatest Indian writer of all time. In a stone inscription dated 634 C.E. unearthed in Aihole in modern-day Karnataka, his name is listed with that of poet Bharavi. Rabindranath Tagore was greatly influenced by Kalidasa. Tagore's poetry about the monsoons reflects Meghadutam's romanticism.

(☺)(☺)(☺)(☺)(☺)



<https://www.kalidasacademy.com/about-kalidasa/>

About Kalidasa

वागर्थाविव सम्पृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।

जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

**Who, worth the name, is not roused to rejoicing
at the blooming of cultured expressions of Kalidasa
like that of bunchy blossom in sweet abundance.**

– Banabhatta in Harshacharitam.

Kalidasa is known to be the greatest repository of our national heritage. The serenity of his artistic accomplishment has earned for him a high place in the galaxy of world poets. Kalidasa's imagination holds in perfect fusion the two elements of natural beauty and human feelings. In his case, both Eastern and Western critics, applying not exactly analogous standards, are in general agreement. He has always been held in high esteem.

Kalidasa has continued to display his relevance through the centuries. Surcharged with wider human sympathy and universal appeal, his character has remained truly Indian. He has influenced the mentors of the Middle Ages, as well as the pioneers of Indian renaissance like Vivekananda and Tagore. Kalidasa continuous to shine throughout the world as one of the greatest exponents of Indian culture. The keen interest of the Western Orientalists made Kalidasa studies more popular in modern times. Kalidasa has thus gone a long way to help develop a deeper understanding between India and the other countries.

Popular legends on the life of Kalidasa

1. Kalidasa, who was first quite a blockhead and was married to a princess, being stung by the scornful words of his wife, determined to secure the favour of Gauri by penance with the result that the goddess conferred upon him high poetic genius. On his return Kalidasa was asked by his wife -... and the poet taking each of the three words as the beginning of three different works composed the Kumara, Megha and Raghu.
2. It is said that Kumaradasa, the king of Ceylon, the author of the Janakiharana threw himself on the funeral pyre of his friend Kalidasa who was murdered by a courtesan of Kumaradasa (6th century A.D.) in Ceylon. The story is that Kumaradasa had written the following line -

बाले? तब मुखाम्भोजे दृष्टमिन्दीवरद्वयम्

on the wall of the mansion of the courtesan, and had promised a handsome reward to one who would complete the samasya. Kalidasa who happened to see that line immediately wrote-

कमले कमलोत्पत्तिः श्रूयते न तु दृश्यते।

Then, the courtesan murdered him and wanted to secure the reward by claiming that she had completed the Samasya the king, however discovered the fraud, but overwhelmed with grief consigned himself to the funeral pyre of Kalidasa.

Kalidasa's Profile

Place & Date

It is known to all that Kalidasa is completely silent about himself regarding his date of birth and also the place. Peoples all over India praise to Mahakavi for all the time due to his poetical excellency. Therefore, people from particular place claim that Kalidasa belongs to their area. But if we go through his works thoroughly, we may find that Kalidasa belongs to Ujjain. In Meghaduta, he describes about Ujjain so beautifully where we may find his personal attachment to Ujjain cannot be ignored. Scholars of Kalidasa are of the opinion that Kalidasa belongs to Ujjain during between the period of second century BC. to 5th century AD

Impact on India and abroad

Kalidasa is unanimously admitted to be the greatest sanskrit poet and dramatist. In India he is praised by all his followers such as postdated poets and critics namely Mamta, Anandavardhancharya, Abhinav Gupta etc.

His poetical style influenced to all the post dated poets to the modern poets of this 20th century also.

In the same manner, we may also find in abroad. It was Sir William Jones who introduced the Shakuntala to the westerners for the first time in the eighteen century; since then almost all the works of Kalidasa have been translated into various Languages and made known to peoples of different countries, and they have been greatly appreciated by them. There can be no doubt that Kalidasa can justifiably take his seat along with Shakespeare.

Works of Kalidasa

Lyrics

Ritusamharam

Ritusamhara is a small lyrical poem of 144 stanzas in 6 cantos, mostly in vamsastha metre (cantos i, ii, v, vi), the variation being vasantatilaka (canto iii) and upendravajra (canto iv). The poem gives a graphic and poetic description of the six seasons of India.

Meghadutam

The meghaduta is smaller in extent than Ritusamahara, the first of the Purvamegha having 66 stanzas and the second half or Uttaramegha is having only 55. This is a poem describing the message of departed Yaksha to his wife, to be conveyed through a cloud.

A Yaksha, servant of lord, Kubera, made some mistake in his duty; Kubera punished him with a curse, banishing him from Alaka into exile for a period of one year. Therefore, Yaksha sent his message to his wife through a cloud.

Epics

Kumarasambhavam

Kumarasambhava, a classical poem of 17 cantos, is based on the mythological myth of love and marriage of Shiva and Parvati, found in Indian epics. The deputation of Kamadeva - the cupid of Indian mythology - by the gods, to tempt the divine ascetic Shiva, to fall in love with Parvati, the destruction of Kamadeva by Shankara, Parvati's resolve to win by renunciation and penance, what her beauty and charm failed to achieve by seduction, Shankara's meeting with Parvati in the garb of an ascetic, their marriage and the birth of son Kumara, who destroyed the god's' enemy, the demon Taraka, are the highlights of this classical poem.

According to A.B. Keith, the well-known British historian of Sanskrit literature, "....to modern taste, the Kumarasambhava appeals more deeply by reason of its richer variety, the brilliance of its fancy and the greater warmth of its feeling".

Raghuvansham

Raghuvansha, a long classical poem of 19 cantos, contains a brilliant account of the illustrious kings of Raghu Dynasty. It is indeed a gallery of brilliant kings - Dilipa, Raghu, Aja, Dasharatha, Rama - painted exquisitely by Kalidasa in which the picture of Rama is undoubtedly the best.

Writing about Kalidasa and his work, Raghuvansha, the reputed western scholar and critic, Monier Williams says "No (other) composition of Kalidasa displays more the richness of his poetic genius, exuberance of his imagination, the warmth and play of his fancy, his profound knowledge of the human heart, his delicate appreciation of its most refined and tender emotions, his familiarity with the workings and counter workings of its conflicting feelings - in short, more entitles him to rank as the Shakespeare of India".

Drama

Malavikagnimitram

Malavikagnimitra is a five-act drama based on king Agnimitra's love for a beautiful girl, Malavika. It is a lighthearted comedy of court life, and depicts the progress of king's desire for the lovely maiden, through various hindrances. Malavika's ultimate discovery as belonging to a royal family and the magnanimity of the elder queen, lead to the fulfillment of Agnimitra's desire. According to the famous critic. R.D. Karmarkar, "Malavikagnimitra is on the whole, an enjoyable play. The plot is a very simple one and the action develops in a surprisingly swift manner and the reader finds that his interest is kept up right to the end".

Vikramorvashiyam

Vikramorvashiya (Uravashi won by valour), a drama of five acts relates the romantic story of the mortal king Pururava and the divine nymph Urvashi. The king, through remarkable display of valour, saves the nymph from the clutches of a demon and falls in love with her, at first sight. The fire of love is fueled by the nymph's separation as a result of her unavoidable return to heaven. However, in view of the consideration that God Indra, the lord of heaven, had for Pururava, his ally in his wars against the demons, the lovers are united in wedlock; but fate intervenes to separate them again and it is only a miracle that reunites them. The inevitable tragedy of love between the mortal and the celestial being is obvious, but again Indra's indulgence brings to the royal couple, the lifelong pleasure of living together. According to M. Winternitz, the reputed German scholar of Indology, the great

popularity that this drama has enjoyed in India, is proved by the fact that there are several versions of its text. It has several times been translated in to German and other European languages. Attempts have been made for adapting it for the stage too.

Abhijnanashakuntalam

Abhigyanashakuntala, a drama of seven acts is based on the old legend of Shakuntala, described in Mahabharata. It is the love story of the king Dushyanta and the hermit girl Shakuntala. Their mutual attraction leads to their marriage by the Gandharva form of marriage in the hermitage. The curse of the sage Durvasa makes the king forget all about his wedding but the discovery of the sign ring given by Dushyanta to his bride reminds him of the happenings in the forest grove, leading to his ultimate union with his wife and son in the abode of divine beings.

Abhigyanashakuntala is, in every respect the most finished of Kalidasa's dramatic compositions. The play is universally recognised as the best specimen of dramatic art in the entire Sanskrit literature. The reputed German poet Goethe, after reading a translation of the play had exclaimed, "Wouldst thou the young year's blossom and the fruit of its decline, And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed? Wouldst thou the heaven and earth itself in one sole name combine I name thee 'Shakuntala, and all at once is said".

(☺)(☺)oooooooooooo(☺)(☺)



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<https://www.hinducollegegazette.com/post/history-of-kalidasa-s-works-through-a-marxist-lens>

History of Kalidasa's Works Through a Marxist Lens

The ancient period of the Indian subcontinent was marked with the writing of rich Sanskrit literature which provides us with an in-depth insight into the society of that time. There had been various revered Sanskrit poets and dramatists whose works are studied till date. One amongst them is Kalidasa who is considered the greatest Sanskrit poet of all time. His works vary from plays to epic poems and minor poems.

There is always a reason behind everything. Similarly, there is an objective behind every author's works and the factors which made him write the way he did. Studying these factors becomes necessary in the sense that they help us connect with the past. This essay is an attempt towards the same.

In this essay, the economic structure prevalent during Kalidasa's time has been analysed to study its effect on social relations during that period. The society, as depicted in his works, will be studied to understand why he wrote the way he did. Further, in the light of facts collected, the reasons for the popularity of his works will be studied. This essay aims to trace the history of the evolution of the importance of his works. The spatial constraints of this essay force the analysis to be limited to a few of his works.

Date of Kalidasa

We do not have any reliable source of information about the time and place of Kalidasa. He has left behind him a treasure of highly revered and celebrated works. Seven works of Kalidasa are known till date which include three epics, namely: *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, *Malavikagnimitram* and *Vikramorvasiyam*; two epic poems, namely: *Raghuvamsa* and *Kumarasambhava*; and two *khandakavyas* or minor poems, namely *Meghadutam* and *Ritusamhara*. Unfortunately, he has left no clue of his personal information (Mirashi and Navlekar 3). There are various theories about the time in which he lived, which some historians and scholars have tried to justify by giving facts and interpreting them. They base their conjectures on references from his works.

Amongst all, the theory of Kalidasa being the court poet of Chandragupta II of the Gupta empire has gone down well and is accepted by most scholars. The mention of Vikramaditya as his patron in *Malavikagnimitram* alludes towards Chandragupta II who had taken up the same title during his reign (Kosambi, *An Introduction* 304). *Kumarasambhava* is supposed to be alluding towards the birth of Kumargupta, the son of Chandragupta II (Ramulu and Ramalu 655). The mention of the celebration of sacrificial rites of the Vedic age in *Raghuvamsa* relates to the frequent mention of restored Vedic practices, which had not been practised for a long time in the records of the Gupta period (Mazumdar 732). The Sanskrit inscription of Mandsaur's Sun temple dated 473 CE is believed to be the earliest evidence of Kalidasa's time as the inscription resembles the verses of *Meghaduta Purva*, 66 and *Ritusamhara* V.2-3 (Gopal 8). Thus, Kalidasa is believed to have lived between 400 and 500 CE.

Nature of the Society during his time

The period before the Gupta dynasty was inclined towards Buddhism and Jainism. The Mauryan king Ashoka was an ardent believer and propagator of Buddhism. The Brahmins had substantially lost their importance during that time. Prevention of ritual sacrifices by Ashoka had hit the interests of the Brahmins because animal sacrifice was the source of their livelihood (Jha 106). Brahminical supremacy, which had been gradually built during the later Vedic period, turned out to be attacked by Buddhism (Thapar, "Asoka and

Buddhism" 46). The nature of religion was gradually changing and people were losing touch of the later Vedic tradition. The secular epics of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* were rewritten and were given a religious touch by the Brahmins (Jha 137).

Post Mauryan rule, Brahmin hegemony was furthered with the practice of land grants to the priests and temples. Instead of paying the priests and officials directly, they were given land grants and the rights to collect taxes over them. This enabled them to live a lavish and comfortable life for generations (Thapar 48). This practice gradually led to the development of a feudal society. The Brahmins and the officers became the masters of their lands and started exploiting the peasantry and the labourers who were generally from the lower *varnas* (Jha 155). The Brahmins made the *varna* system stringent by redacting the *Puranas* and advocating their supremacy over the other *varnas*. Religion was used as a tool to maintain social order. Emphasis was laid on adhering to the duties assigned to the *varnas* religiously and even a *shudra* could attain salvation with the service of the twice-born and devotion to God (Jha 161).

During the Gupta period, Sanskrit was made the main language of inscriptions due to the strong influence of Brahmins. This shows the connections between the ruling class and Brahmins, who supported their rule. Classical Sanskrit was not the language of the commons (Kosambi 69).

His Works

According to Marx, the social existence of a person determines his consciousness (Aron 120). Similarly, Kalidasa's works can be considered a reflection of the society he lived in. His works were written in Sanskrit and all his works have two things in common, i.e., they are comedies and people of the upper and lower castes do not speak the same language. Women and the *shudras* spoke Prakrit (R. Sharma 146). In *Raghuvamsa*, Kalidasa talks about religiously following the *varna* system and that going against it would not bring happiness to the society. He gives a reference of Rama cutting off the head of a *shudra* for practising penance—which is supposed to be the prerogative of the Brahmins (Jones 641). Characters of *shudra varna* do not feature much in his works, which are instead centred on Brahmins and the ruling class. He also gives the reference of the land grants in the form of villages to the Brahmins (Jones 472).

The usage of Sanskrit in his works implies that the target audience included the political elites and those sections of the society who were familiar with the language, i.e. poets and courtesans. Women and *shudras* were not a part (Singh 344). Kalidasa reflected the social consciousness of the society through his works. His works grew popular because they advocated the ideology which the dominant section of the society wanted to promulgate. In *Raghuvamsa* and *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, we see instances of Kalidasa's characterisation of women as meek and docile. Sita, as portrayed by him, speaks ill of herself and her fortune when abandoned by Rama (Jones 631), which is in total contrast to Valmiki's Sita, who is bold and a woman of pride and self-respect (Kumar 61). Shakuntala of *Mahabharata* is a fearless character who confidently

confronts Dushyanta when she takes her son to his court whereas Kalidasa portrays her as a damsel in distress when left alone by her friends in Dushyanta's court (Rustomji 47). His works helped in promoting the supremacy of upper *varnas* and subjugation of women through the religious stories. He had chosen the characters of his works from religious texts due to the strong influence of religion in society.

Post Kalidasa

Kalidasa was famous from the time of the conception of his works. He is believed to have had the patronage of Chandragupta II. Sanskrit theatre enjoyed the patronage of the Gupta kings (Varadpande 237). The Mandsaur inscription of 473 C.E. also alludes to the fact that Kalidasa was famous during the time in which he is contested to have lived. In the times after Kalidasa, various poets have lauded his literary brilliance. The sixth century writer Dandin praises him for refining the *Vaidarbha* style of composition (Gopal 1). The 634 CE Aihole inscription of Chalukya king Pulakesin II mentions Kalidasa as a famous poet. He had also been praised for his sweet and charming way of writing by Banabhatta in *Harshacharita* written in the seventh century (Gopal 1). Cambodian inscriptions ranging between the seventh and the tenth century CE have references of *Raghuvamsa*. An eighth century Javanese inscription also alludes to his work (Singh 343). Rajasekhara in the tenth century AD, Padmagupta and Sodhdhala in the eleventh century AD and Govardhanacharya in the twelfth century AD have all written in Kalidasa's praise (Mirashi and Navlekar 459). We do not get any mention of Kalidasa during the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal rule. The reason could be the advent of Persian and Arabic literature and meagre royal patronage to Sanskrit scholars. However, we get the reference of a poet with the pen name Akbariya Kalidasa in the court of Akbar in the sixteenth century. His real name was Govinda Bhatta (Chaudhari 5). This alludes to the popularity of Kalidasa among Sanskrit writers of that time so much so that his name was adopted as a pen name.

Kalidasa's works were translated into English by Sir William Jones in the late eighteenth century. The intention was that the Indian people "might be ruled justly according to their prejudices, civil and religious, and suffered to enjoy their customs unmolested" (Cannon and Pandey 528). He was eager to know whether Sanskrit plays contained some information on Hindu law. He chose to translate *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, the most revered Sanskrit play. He published the translation in England in 1789. It was translated in German in 1791. It was heavily lauded by eminent European poets of that time which included Herber and Goethe. Impressed by Kalidasa's works, Goethe praised him by writing a note on Shakuntala in his play, Faust (Cannon and Pandey 529). This was followed by a flurry of translations into various European languages. His works have also inspired Indian authors like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Rabindranath Tagore (Mirashi and Navlekar 460).

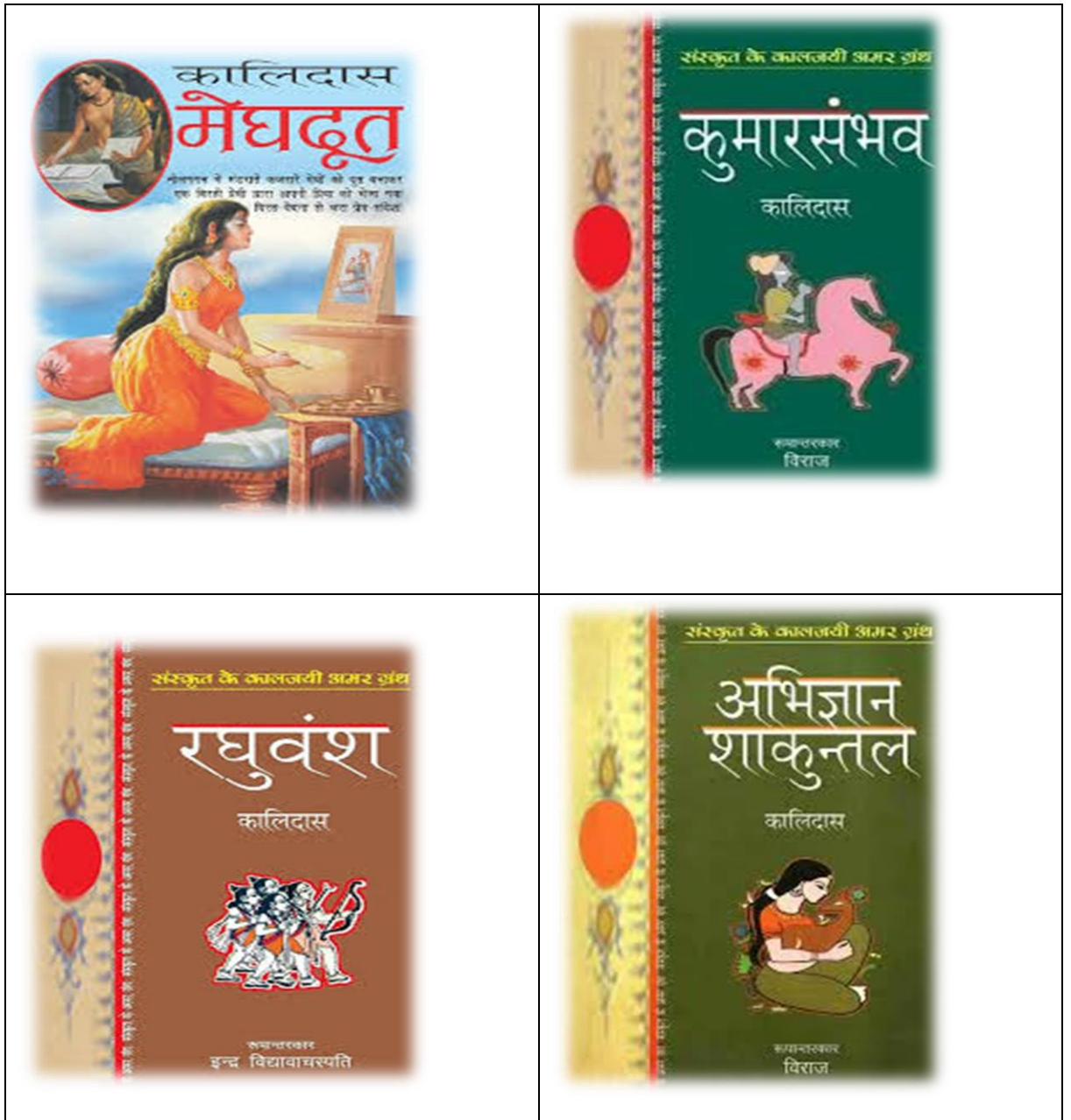
Conclusion

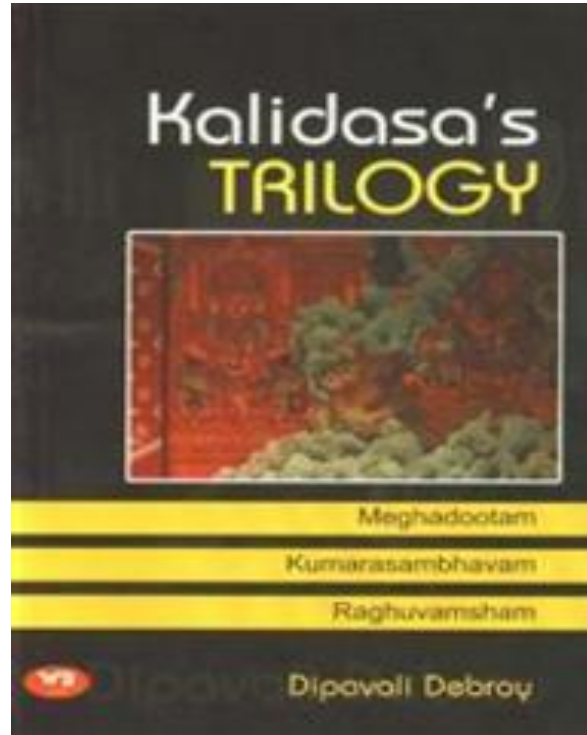
Kalidasa has been lauded for his literary brilliance from the time of the inception of his works. His works have been a source of inspiration for various

writers who have followed. Being written in Sanskrit, his works would have been limited to the upper *varnas* of society. He is contested to be a Brahmin whose works were centred around men and power. Brahminical hegemony, as a function of land grants made to them, worsened the status of lower *varnas* due to exploitation at the hands of landowners. The idea that the dominant section of society wanted to propagate was at the centre of his works. His works tried to manifest the idea of the Gupta age being the "Golden Age". This itself explains the reason for his works being very popular.

Therefore, this essay establishes that his works were the reflection of his society, written with a male Brahmin's perspective, limited to a section of society which was in power due to changes in the economic infrastructure, popular because they depicted the mindset of the audience and sounded music to their ears, and remained popular during the course of time among other Sanskrit writers.

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<https://www.sapnaonline.com/books/kalidasa-s-trilogy-maghadootam-kumarasambhavam-dipavali-debroy-8188043729-9788188043729>

Kalidasa's Trilogy

Maghadootam, Kumarasambhavam, Raghuvamsham

About The Book

Kalidasa's Trilogy Consists of the Book consists of three of kalidasa's poetical works: Meghadootam, Kaumarasambhavam and Raghuvamsham.

The book starts by introducing Kalidasa to the readers and goes on to introducing his above-mentioned worlds. Then the three stories are presented, not as a literal translation from Sanskrit, but as an adaptation in English prose highlighting the beauty of Kalidasa's poetry at every step. Except for Meghadootam, which is an original tale of a yaksha pinning for his wife and sending a love-massage through a cloud; Kalidasa has drawn from older sources like the Puranas and Ramayana for his other works. Kumarasambhavam is about Shiva and

Parvati. Raghuvamsham is about a royal family, the Suryavamsha, the family of Rama of Ramayana.

The purpose of this book is to bring to the readers the treasures of Indian classic literature, so that they are able to understand and appreciate its beauty and are encouraged to read the original works.

Introduction

Even the twenty-first century admires Kalidasa, the renowned poet of ancient India, who composed in Sanskrit the highly-rated works Meghadootam, Kumarasambhava, Raghuvamsham, Abhigyanashakuntalam, Malavikagnimitram, and Vikramorvashiyam.

But unlike most Sanskrit poets, he did not speak about himself in his works. Most of the information on him is folklore rather than history. His time and place Kalidasa is supposed to have been the court-poet of Raja Vikramaditya of Ujjaini, one of the navaratna (nine gems) the king had as his courtiers.

In his works, Kalidasa described landmarks of Ujjaini (like the temple of Mahakala and the river Sipra) with enthusiasm, and made eulogistic references to the name 'Vikrama'. Along with wondermi descriptions of nature, his work shows great familiarity with urban living, especially in palaces and courts. But 'Vikramaditya' is a title rather than a name and there have been many kings in Indian history with the title of 'Vikramaditya'. Which Vikramaditya should Kalidasa be dated by?

Some scholars put him in the court of a Vikramaditya whose rule commenced in 56 BC and who is the founder of the Vikramera, and would not place Kalidasa beyond the 1 century, AD.

Some think that Kalidasa's Vikramaditaya was Yashodharmadeva, the king of Malaya in the 6th century, AD.

Others argue that Kalidasa's works reflect the heyday of the Gupta period (300-650 AD) and there was more than one Gupta king with the title of Vikramaditya and one of these must have been Kalidasa's Vikramaditya. What we do know for sure is that the Aihole inscription of 634 AD mentions Kalidasa by name and the Mandasor inscription of 472 AD seem to borrow from Kalidasa. These set a lower limit to Kalidasa.

Kalidasa depicted not only Ujjaini, but a host of other places in northern India, especially the Himalayas. He must have traveled a lot, and loved doing it. He had known the smell of the freshly ploughed earth as well as that of the sap of coniferous trees. He had seen peacocks dance in the forest to the clap of thunder, as well as in the palace, to the jingle of ladies' bangles.

His life — or legend?

The story goes that Kalidasa in his youth was ignorant and inarticulate. Princess Kamala, who was highly educated and very proud of being so, had announced that she would marry only someone who could get the better of her in a learned discourse.

Two learned men, defeated at her hands, decided to teach her a lesson by tricking her into marrying someone really stupid. They found a man on a tree cutting off the very branch he was sitting upon. Asking him not to open his mouth before the princess, but answer only in signs, they presented him at the court as a very learned scholar. By a combination of his gestures and their interpretations, Kalidasa won the debate without even saying a word. Princess Kamala happily married him, but right on the wedding night, a camel (ushtra in Sanskrit) called out outside their bedroom. Coyly the princess asked, "O husband, what is that?"

Instead of any clever discourse, Kalidasa came out with "Ushta". "What did you say?" cried the princess, in disbelief that a learned scholar could not even pronounce the word correctly.

Realizing that he had made some sort of a blunder, Kalidasa tried to correct himself by saying "Utra, Utra."

This was no scholar, the princess realized. She threw Kalidasa out and went into depression. Kalidasa made every effort to educate himself and cure any speech defects that he had.

Roaming in the forest and praying to deities, he received the blessings of the goddess Kali (Sarasvati, according to some). From a dullard who could not even pronounce Sanskrit words correctly, he became transformed into the poet Kalidasa, one who serves Kali).

With his new-found literary gifts, he went knocking at Kamala's door again. "Who is it", she asked.

"Asti kashchit vakvishesha (someone specially gifted with words is here)", came the reply and Kamala realized that her husband had come back a changed man. She then requested him to compose literary pieces, each beginning with one of the four words that Kalidasa has used.

Kalidasa began Kumarasambhavam with 'asti', Meghadootam with 'kaschit' and his Raghuvamsham with 'yak', but possibly could not keep it up any further. There is no work of his that begins with 'vishesha'.

Apart from these three poetical works, he wrote three famous plays: Abhigyanashakuntalam, Vikramorvasiyam and Malavikagnimitram. There are other works that are said to

be his, but are really imitations. Minor poets of later times have often tried to pass off their works in his name. But Kalidasa's poetry is so distinctive that they have not really succeeded. Works that unquestionably bear his stamp are the six mentioned at the outset.

In spite of Kalidasa's becoming a court-poet, there is no account of how his end came. But the legend is that he was murdered by a courtesan in Ceylon (Srilanka), whose king Kumaradasa was a friend of his.

Kalidasa — his style and sources

Except for Meghadootam, which is all-original, Abhigyanashakuntalam, Kumarasambhavam and Raghuvamsham are drawn from even older sources, like Mahabharata, Ramayana, Brahma-Purana, Kalika-Purana, Shiva Purana. Even Malavikagnimitram and Vikramorvashiyam have references to mythology and history.

Kalidasa's works are free from involved constructions, forced witticisms and worn-out similes. His style is simple and sweet, his observations original, and his imagery fresh. His mastery of various rhythmic patterns makes him a delight to read and recite. He strikes the right balance between melody and majesty. If, out of all these qualities, any one is to be singled out as his specialty, that would be his similes, or as the old Sanskrit phrase goes, "upama Kalidasasya. ". Their aptness and originality are unrivalled.

But more important than any stylistics, it is the human quality in Kalidasa's works that is his hallmark. The descriptions of Nature in Meghadootam are superb, but what makes them all the more remarkable is that they are seen through a film of human emotions felt by a creature — the Yaksha

— Who is superhuman or mythical?

Even when Kalidasa drew upon existing sources, he made them undergo a transformation, a trans-creation. He filled out the bare outlines of legendary or historical sources. On their foundations he built splendid structures of his poetic imagination. Shakuntala's story is there in Veda vyasa's Mahabharata, but narrated in the impersonal, aloof manner of great epic literature. When Kalidasa retells it, his focus is on the personal elements, the intimate feelings.

In Kumarasambhavam, when Kalidasa takes us through the story of Shiva and Parvati getting wed, he brings out the human emotions in a way the Puranas did not. He depicts Himalaya as the father of a young marriageable daughter, keen to get Shiva for his son-in-law, but too self-respecting to broach the topic himself. He depicts his wife as a mother who longs for her daughter's wedding right from her childhood, but sheds tears when the day actually arrives. Parvati he presents as a young girl used to her looks being praised, who gets a big shock when she finds Shiva above beauty that is not spiritual but only physical. What is more, Kalidasa imbues the great Shiva — one of the main godheads of the Hindu trinity — with very human qualities. Having made Parvati undergo rigorous penance to raise her spiritual level, he has to try to bring her back to the level when he can win a smile from her, and ultimately, her favours. In the process, he has to descend to making his ghostly attendants make ghastly faces at her, take her on a honeymoon trip, and eventually make her drunk!

In Raghuvamsham, Kalidasa takes us through generations of a particular royal family, the Suryavamsha or Solar dynasty. He describes conquests and governance, but more than that, the pain of having no son and heir that Dilipa and Dasharatha have to experience, and of subjugating personal feelings to public opinion that Rama had to do. It shows how every scion

of the family cannot be equally strong. It demonstrates how a once-glorious dynastic rule came to a sorry end. But it also leaves posterity a chance to believe in the revival of this family in particular and the strength of family-line in general. It is not a chronicle of kings; it is a story of human interest. The play Vikramorvashiyam is about the love of a mortal for an immortal — the celestial nymph Urvashi. It is best known for a scene in which King Vikrama wanders through a forest, apostrophizing flowers and plants as if they were his vanished love. Malavikagnimitram, the third of Kalidasa's plays, is a playful intrigue among royal ladies, without any great purpose, but nevertheless an accomplished piece of work.

Kalidasa — his universality and eternity

Kalidasa enjoyed great popularity in his own time, and was exalted by later Sanskrit poets such as Banabhatta, Kumarila, Govindacharya and Jayadeva. In more recent times, Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore was an admirer of Kalidasa, and Bengali literature in general owes a lot to Kalidasa's Sanskrit.

In the West, Kalidasa has been admired by Goethe, Humboldt, Schlegel, Max Mueller, Sir William Jones, and Sir Monier Williams. In 1955, the World Peace Council in Vienna called on all people to pay tribute to Kalidasa in 1956.

But how did Kalidasa go west? Walter Rubens (Kalidasa, The Human Meaning of his Works, first published in Berlin in 1957, translated and reprinted in India in 1984) has this to say:

"In 1789, just at the outbreak of the French Revolution, Sir William Jones (who became the judge at the Supreme Court of Bengal in 1783) published an English prose translation of Abhigyanashakuntalam. He demonstrated to an astonished Europe that ancient India had known the drama or the stage-

play, and compared Kalidasa to the great English poet and dramatist, Shakespeare."

In 1791, George Forster, the Mainz Jacobin (revolutionary democrats revolting against big landowners and big bourgeoisie in France) produced his German prose translation of Jone's English version of Abhigyanashakuntalam. He sent a copy to Goethe, who was inspired to comment:

"Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms and the fruits of its decline, and all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed?

Wouldst thou the earth and heaven itself in one sole name combine? I name thee, O Shakuntala, and all at once is said." It does not really matter that Kalidasa cannot be dated and placed exactly. He belongs to all times and the whole world. And that is why, though several translations and adaptations already exist, here is yet another, of his three poetical works — to enable contemporary world-citizens to take a fresh look at Kalidasa.

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Poet Kalidas Memorial, Ramtek

The Kalidasa memorial of Ramtek is dedicated to the ancient Sanskrit poet Kalidasa (c. 400 CE). He is cherished for his Hindu classics, regarded by many as one of the greatest Indian author and poet ever. He is best known for the Meghaduta, the Abhijnanashakuntala, the Vikramorvashi, the Malavikagnimitra, the Raghuvamsha and the Kumarasambhava.

Kalidasa lived in Ramtek and composed some of his work here. The memorial commemorates his life, and is one of several in India. The Ramtek Kalidas memorial is near the Ramtek Fort, was built in the 1970s by the state government of Maharashtra. It includes a park, water fountains, a round-plan structure. A selection of Kalidasa's work is inscribed on the memorial walls. It also has paintings depicting scenes from his work.



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Memorial of Mahakavi Kalidasa in Himalayas



The memorial of Mahakavi Kalidasa in village Kavilda near Kalimath in Rudraprayag district in Uttarakhand state. It is said that the great poet and writer was born here in the Himalayas.



Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University Ramtek

About University

Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University (KKSU)

was established on 18 September 1997. It is named to pay rich tribute to Legendary Sanskrit Mahakavi Kalidas. KKSU is an institution dedicated to the advanced learning of Sanskrit. It is located at Ramtek which falls under Nagpur District, the second capital of Maharashtra. KKSU is the First Sanskrit University of Maharashtra.

KKSU - A History of Establishment

The former Prime Minister of India, P.V. Narasimha Rao, who is a great Scholar of Sanskrit, was keen on setting up an independent Sanskrit University in Maharashtra, as there is a rich tradition of Sanskrit learning here. With encouragement from Mr. Rao, the late Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Sudhakarraoji Naik took up the issue and appointed Dr. Shrikant Jichkar as one member committee to give a study report for establishing the Sanskrit University in Maharashtra. Dr. Jichkar prepared the study report and a non-formal University act for the establishment of Sanskrit University in Maharashtra. The Government of Maharashtra took up the issue and appointed a committee comprising of Sanskrit scholars and other educationists. On the basis of the report of the committee the State Government established the University on 18 September 1997 at Ramtek and named it after the National poet of India, Kalidasa, Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, that time Hon'ble Shri Manoharrao Joshi was the Chief Minister.

Peeping into the past we find references that poet Kalidas was considered as "Kavikulaguru". It is believed that he wrote his poems while in the town of Ramtek — the reason for establishing the university at this place. One of the Outstanding Scholar of Sanskrit and Eminent personality of Vidarbha region Dr. Pankaj Chande was the Founder Vice-Chancellor of KKSU.

A blend of Traditional and Modern

The University provides course work in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), and a Ph.D. degree. KKSU is unique in nature in that it has innovative academic program and syllabus which focuses on a modern approach to the Sanskrit language. It caters to traditional learning in Sanskrit like Veda, Vedanta, Vyakarana, Nyaya, Mimamsa, Dharmashastra and Sahitya etc. In addition to preserving traditional Sanskrit, it emphasizes on the study of science and

technology in ancient India, which is exclusively described in old Sanskrit texts. Every course has Sanskrit as compulsory subject, which is taught in combination with the most modern subjects like Travel Tourism, Hospitality Studies, Journalism, Yoga, Foreign Languages etc. To facilitate double gain for the students, the university has converted I.A.S. M.P.S.C. curriculum into Civil Services Degree Course having Sanskrit as an important subject.

Recognitions and Accreditations

The UGC recognized University with 12B & 2f status and accredited by NAAC with B++. It gives recognition to the educational institution for specialized studies in the jurisdiction of Maharashtra & Goa. It is a prominent research centre for researchers.

Facilities

KKSU offers various facilities like Library, Computer labs, Auditorium, Green Jym, Cafeteria as students across country and outside prefer studying in this top class university. The library is located in the Ramtek Campus. It has a huge collection of journals, books, rare books, manuscripts and theses. The library also has Internet Facility. Separate Hostel facility is available for Girl & Boys.

About Campus

The University has multi-campus with its main campus located at Ramtek which is 50 km away from Nagpur city. The other campus is located at Waranga. All the administrative and academic departments are working from Ramtek Campus. In Waranga Campus. Now the construction work has started in Waranga Campus. In Waranga, University is going to set up an International Study Centre.



'Kavi Kalidas Sanskrit Sadhana' Award

<https://sanatanprabhat.org/english/121844.html>



Nagpur, Dec 16 - The government has increased the amount of 'Kavi Kalidas Sanskrit Sadhana' award given by the Higher and Technical Education Department for the promotion and dissemination of Sanskrit language to Rs 1 lakh. 'Kavi Kulguru Kalidas Sanskrut Vishwavidyalaya' at Nagpur gives this award every year. However, the university was not even funded by the government for the distribution of the last six awards. The daily Sanatan Prabhat was the first to report on the matter and published reports from time to time. Both these demands have been acted upon by the government and in the winter session of the Vidhimandal (legislature) on December 16, a fund of Rs 23.68 lakh has been approved for the Mahakavi Kalidas Sanskrit Sadhana Puraskar and Gyanjyoti Savitribai Phule Puraskar Scheme.

The 'Mahakavi Kalidas Sanskrit Sadhana' award is given to eight people, including professors, teachers, priests, activists, etc., who have promoted and disseminated Sanskrit, that included a citation and Rs. 25,000 each. This award has been given since 2012. However, in the last 12 years, the amount of this award has not been increased by a single rupee. More than 10 awards and programs are organized every year for the promotion of Urdu language. Millions of rupees spent on it were reported in the daily 'Sanatan Prabhat'. In the winter session of the legislature an amount of Rs. 1 lakh has been approved for each of the 8 awards to be given for Sanskrit language.



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A tribute to Mahakavi Kalidas by Artistes of Mahagami

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/events/aurangabad/a-tribute-to-mahakavi-kalidas-by-artistes-of-mahagami/articleshow/70072184.cms>





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Mahakavi Kalidas Natyamandir

<https://cityseeker.com/mumbai/396094-mahakavi-kalidas-natyamandirMahakavi>

Kalidas Natya Mandir, popularly known as **Kalidas Auditorium**, is located in the central suburbs of Mumbai. With a capacity of 1500 seating, this auditorium has been a stage for plays and theater for years together, especially the regional kind. Named after the famous Indian poet Kalidas, the auditorium has witnessed the best of art and culture. Famous plays like *Marathi Bana*, *Sai re Sai*, *Me Nathura Godse Boltoye* and so on have been among the famous plays held at this auditorium. A lot of events and live performances along with ceremonial functions are also conducted here. With moderate admission costs (cash only) and food provisions, this place is very popular with the locals.





Kindly visit the Web Link to listen a TALK on

Upama Kalidasasya Similes in Kalidasa's Raghuvamsha

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=RS3hS-wSxTU> [41:31]

Kālidāsa is known as the master of similes. The Sanskrit tradition has proclaimed it as 'Upamā Kālidāsasya.' The variety, depth and appropriateness of his similes remains unsurpassed to this day. A study of his similes is itself an education in many branches of knowledge. Instead of confining ourselves

strictly to the similes, we can look at the superset called sādr̥ṣyamūlālāṅkāra. Dr̥ṣṭānta (Analogy) and atīśayokti (hyperbole) also fall into the same category.

In his work Raghuvamśam, Kālidāsa reaches his zenith in terms of similes. In this work, he provides strikingly apt similes drawn from such diverse areas as mythology, agriculture, grammar, nature, scriptures, astrology, statecraft, and of course, day-to-day life. His mastery over each one of these branches is aptly represented by his similes. Beyond strict similes, he has given us some wonderful examples of dr̥ṣṭānta, utprekṣā and atīśayokti also. They are all basically rooted in comparison like the simile.

तं सन्तः श्रोतुमर्हन्ति
सदसद्व्यक्तिहेतवः ।
हेम्नः संलक्ष्यते ह्यग्नौ
विशुद्धिः श्यामिकापि वा ॥

Meaning: This work (Raghuvamśam) shall be read by those who can differentiate between right and wrong. The purity or the lack of it in gold is determined only when it is subjected to fire.

* भीमकान्तैर्नृपगुणैः
स भभूलोपजीविनाम् ।
अधृष्यश्चाभि गम्यश्च
याधोरत्नैरिवार्णवः ॥

Meaning: King Dilipa was welcoming as well as intimidating. He was intimidating for the immoral but welcoming for the needy. He was like the sea which is intimidating because of the dangerous animals that inhabit it but which is also welcoming because of the great riches it has inside.



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<https://www.wisdomlib.org/history/compilation/triveni-journal/d/doc68278.html>

Kalidasa's Similes

Purasu Balakrishnan

(Translated by the Author from his original Tamil Essay)

"Metaphor is the special mark of genius,
for the power of making
a good metaphor is the power of recognizing likeness."

<<< Aristotle.

In [Sanskrit poetry Kalidasa](#) has long been recognized as “excelling in similes” (“*Upama Kalidasasya*”). He recognized likenesses everywhere around him. His mind was full of visions of beauty—of moments of intense sensuous experience—and his similes stand out as perfect pictures of those impassioned moments. As a dramatist dealing with human problems he falls short of many authors, ancient and modern, but in the rich accumulation of such poetic experience he holds a unique place among the poets of the world.

When he stands at the confluence of the [Ganges](#) and the Jumna, the richness and enchantment of that moment, as he observes that mingling of the two waters, he communicates to us in one similar after another: *

“Behold, Seeta, the current of the Ganges broken by the waves of the Jumna. Here are pearls and shining emeralds, thrown into a heap together. There are lotuses, blue and white, strung into wreaths. Here it looks like emigrant flamingoes flapping their wings in the company of dark grey geese. Yonder there we see some pattern like black leaves painted on white sandaled ground. Here it looks like the splendour of the moonlight in the dappled shade. There on the waters we see patches of the autumnal sky peering through clouds. And here we behold something like [Shiva](#)’s form, smeared with ash and adorned with black snakes.”

In this we hear the voice of a poet trying to express an inexpressible vision of beauty in terms of similar images. It is characteristic of Kalidasa’s poetic fervour and sincerity. Everything that he saw he seized with all his senses, as if he would hold it in his hands, turn it round and view it in all its aspects and become intimate with it. He had a vivid, prehensile imagination.

“Inspired realization,” says Lascelles Abercrombie in his book, *The Theory of Poetry*, “is perhaps the commonest, as it is also perhaps the most useful, of the workings of genius in poetry. There is a fine example in the beautiful Indian [drama](#) *Sakuntala*; the chariot of the god [Indra](#) driving through heaven passes over a cloud, and at once the wetted rims of the wheels begin to spin moisture off in sparkling showers. Of course! That is exactly what would happen. Keats has the very same thing in *Endymion* but he may have looked into Sir William Jones’ version of Kalidasa:

‘A silver car, air-borne,
Whose silent wheels, fresh-wet from clouds of morn,
Spun off a drizzling dew’.”

Another instance of such vivid, vitalizing imagination is Dushyanta’s description of the earth which unrolls itself below him as he descends from the sky in Indra’s car:

“Rushing through the air what wondrous things I saw!
How from the mountains the earth shelved away
As the great peaks emerged; wrapt no more
In indistinguishable foliage, [trees](#)
Towered up and showed the stature of their stems.
The rivers that were narrowed into threads
Of shining silver, broadened their green banks;

And momentarily grown nearer, all the earth
Was by some unseen power flung up to me."
(Tr.: Laurence Binyon)

Inspired realization of this kind is perhaps best exemplified in some of Kalidasa's similes, with lightning-like brilliance and rapidity of revelation. For in them it displays its power in a concentrated form, the similes being lines and not complete pictures. [Rama](#) thus points out to Seeta the bridge which he had built across the sea, while they fly home in the aerial car:

"Behold, Vaidehi, the ocean foaming against my bridge which divides it as far as the [Malaya](#) mountain, like the milky way dividing the autumnal sky."

This simile gives us a true idea of what the ocean with the dividing bridge fact will look to a spectator from above. The sky is of the same dimension as the ocean and must, with the foamy milky way, appear to spectators from below beg the same as what the ocean with the foam-covered bridge must appear to spectators from above. Similes like this, which are unerring in their judgment and precision and true to every detail—which are, in short, born of "inspired realization"—are found in profusion in Kalidasa's poetry. For example, Rama's description of the sea shore to Seeta in the same situation:

"The [forests](#) of [Tamala](#) and [Tali](#) trees on the strand are reduced to a thin dark-blue line by this distance; and owing to this the salt sea looks like an iron wheel with edges rusty."

Thus Kalidasa's similes are emotional and intellectual at the same time. For he imagined things not only like a poet but also like a scientist. His perception was not only sensuous but also disciplined:

"See, my beloved, how the sun
With beams that o'er the water shake
From western skies has now begun
A bridge of gold across the lake."
(Tr.: Ryder)

He has observed that the setting sun very near the water's edge is reflected across the entire expanse of the waters.

And the greatest glory of poetry is achieved in his similes—namely, the achievement of blending numerous images and feelings into single short pictures:

"As on the [tree](#) the lightning,
On them fell His wrath;
He to unknown regions
Silent sought His path."
(Tr.: R.C. Dutt)

This is how he describes the anger of the great god [Siva](#) when He was disturbed from His penance by the meddlesome god of Love. In such an apparently simple

and unpretentious simile as this, how many pictures and feelings are blended together, the suddenness of Siva's wrath, the destructive fire of it, His vanishing, and its equal suddenness, the total annihilation of Manmatha (the god of Love), and the terror and desolation of [Parvati](#)! This is the very stuff of poetry inasmuch as Kalidasa transmits to us a spark of his own creativeness and we begin to create these images for ourselves.

Suggestion, it is often said, is the soul of poetry. The surpassing suggestiveness of Kalidasa's similes is a thing which cannot be brought out in translations. But it is such a rich quality of theirs that must indicate it. Kalidasa thus describes Siva in meditation as He appeared to the luckless god of Love who came to aim his shaft at Him:

"Like the deep cloud-dark but silent,
Like the ocean-vast but still,
Like the flame-by winds unshaken,
Dreaded God of dauntless will!"
(Tr.: R. C. Dutt)

Reading the Sanskrit original one feels something shadowy, something grave and ominous descending on one—something portentous of the coming tragedy. One feels that the cloud may burst at any moment, that the ocean may soon surge, that the flame may shortly quiver. There is a tension, a state of unnaturalness which cannot last long, in the air. All the similes are negatively stressed. It is borne in upon us by the poet's diction that the cloud is surcharged with water, that the ocean is potentially turbulent, that the flame is steady only because the vital currents have been suspended for a while. Through the poet we ourselves enjoy the privilege of creative experience.

Just as in one simile-picture he conjures up other images and feelings which he has in mind, Kalidasa sometimes employs similes to make clear his idea to us. All the knowledge acquired in her previous birth came to young Parvati at the time of her instruction, and Kalidasa explains it thus:

"As the swans resort to the Ganges when autumn sets in, or as their native lustre returns to the luminous herbs at nightfall, so the knowledge of her previous life became Parvati's at the time of instruction."

This is as such as to say that it was quite a natural process—like any of the natural phenomena.

Similarly, he employs similes to render clear and convincing paradoxical ideas: Indra, the [king](#) of Gods, sues for a mortal's help to destroy the demons, and this is how his charioteer explains it:

"Indra, the mighty, who deigns to call you friend,
Appoints you their destroyer. The dark night
No sun can enter, yet the moon subdues it."
(Tr.: Laurence Binyon)

It may be observed here that the moon owes its light to the sun, and Indian astronomy was advanced enough in Kalidasa's days for him to be cognizant of this fact. To give another illustration, Dushyanta claims that he has been more seriously hit by love than Sakuntala:

"Lovely one, you Love with his fever fills,
But not, as me, consumes, destroys, devours;
Day glares upon the parching lotus flowers,
But the wan moon he withers and he kills."
(Tr.: Laurence Binyon)

These reveal to us that Kalidasa's mind worked essentially in terms of similes or likenesses, that it was rational and of the highest poetic order—which the latter, in fact, signifies its being rational and inspired, intensive and disciplined at the same time.

"In order to describe horse-thieves," says Chekov, "I must all the time speak and think in their tone and feel in their way." This is spoken just like a modern. Kalidasa does think and feel in the way of his characters, but because similes are things of beauty, he imparts to them a spark of his own, even while they retain their individuality. This may appear paradoxical but it is true and constitutes one of the charms of his similes. The most striking example of this is the most homely one: one of the two hermits who escort Sakuntala from the [forest](#) to the city views the luxury of the palace with strange eyes and remarks to his brother-hermit.

"These pleasure-seeking folk strike me as funny—as oil-smeared men appear to those that have bathed, as the scheming appear to the guileless, as sleeping men to those that are up early, as fettered slaves to free men."

Of course! The hermit has in him the pride of cleanliness and purity. Many an early morning in the forest, on returning fresh and clean after the river-bath, he must have come upon poor, unclean foresters and viewed with disgust the dust and the oil on their limbs; or on way home after chanting hymns on the river-bank, he must have been struck by some of those people still asleep outside their huts, he must have thought of their dull tedious lives and felt himself free, liberated from animal existence. And the ideas that spring to his mind in the palace ring true to his experiences in the hermitage. And thus with the few strokes of his similes, Kalidasa has characterised the hermit in the way of a great master.

Dushyanta, when he has to return to his city from Sakuntala's hermit [grove](#), expresses his unwillingness thus:

"My limbs move forward, while my heart flies
Like silken standards borne against the breeze."
(Tr.: MacDonnel)

We may note here how natural and happy the comparison to a standard is on the lips of a "car-warrior" like Dushyanta.

To give two more instances, for their intrinsic beauty:

When the two friends of Sakuntala decide to keep Durvasa's curse a secret from her, one of them remarks, "Would any one sprinkle a jasmine-vine with scalding water?" (Tr.: Ryder) Her way of thinking is just like the child of Nature that she is, watering the plants of the hermitage and gathering flowers daily for worship. Again when Sakuntala, a child of Nature like her friends, is rejected by the King in the court, when her whole being is writhing and shrinking into itself with shame and she accuses her deceiver, even then she does not go beyond the sights and accidents of forest-life, and her words reveal to us not only her anguish and the beauty of her soul but also the texture of her mind:

"Ignoble! By your own heart you judge mine. Who else would act like you? You robe yourself in righteousness and all the time you are false, like a deep well covered over with grass!"

Thus, Kalidasa's similes, even when they are quite brief and not striking on the first reading, are executed with consummate art, just as the clear surface of a pool does not often reveal its depth. His similes are charged with sensuous, emotional and intellectual content all at once; a single moment which each express is charged with such intense experience. It is intensity which makes an experience poetic; and judged by this standard Kalidasa towers in an almost unique way over other poets.

Kalidasa not only speaks and feels in the way of the character who speaks and feels; he also hears and feels in the way of the character who feels. The latter statement is only an extension of the former. But it is worthy of illustration as the illustration justifies itself. Just as a letter partakes not only of the character of the writer but also to some extent of the person to whom he writes it, so Kalidasa's similes suit the person to whom they are addressed. Dushyanta confesses to Sakuntala his inexplicable madness in rejecting her thus:

"Lovely one, cast away your grief. When I did not recognize you I was under a potent spell, I know not how. Strange how one acts sometimes as if mad, spurning even one's good fortune! You throw a garland round the neck of a blind man and he shakes it away frightened, thinking it a snake."

This is a frank confession of his folly, made with tenderness and repentance. The garland to wear and to adore is fitting figure for the person to whom and the simile is addressed. On the other hand, when Dushyanta blames himself for his folly before the sage Maricha, he describes himself thus:

"Like one who doubts an elephant,
Though seeing him stride by,
And yet believes when he has seen
The footprints left; so I."
(Tr.: Ryder)

Here Dushyanta ruthlessly denounces himself for having rejected Sakuntala when she sought him, while he recognized her later when he saw her lost ring. How the simile fits in with the nature of the rishi to whom it is addressed—the dispassionate

man, who views things in a stern cold light! Would it be fact, half as pleasing if it had been said by him to Sakuntala, exposing as it does the same delusion? Again, when Dushyanta in his loneliness blames himself for his rejection of Sakuntala, he mourns:

I treated her with scorn and loathing ever;
Now o'er her pictured charms my heart will burst:
A traveller I, who scorned the mighty river
And seeks in the mirage to quench his thirst."
(Tr.: Ryder)

Here again his delusion is brought out, and with it, his naked passion. To Sakuntala he expresses himself delicately; but to himself he is more honest about himself. Each of the three similes, describing his strange forgetfulness, occupies its own place which the poet assigned to it. This points to the exuberance of his fancy, to the sureness of his touch and to the manner of his thinking in terms of analogy and likenesses.

We have returned to the point we started from. In some cases the poet, instead of picking out outward likenesses, proceeds from the outward to the inward, from the material to the spiritual, from the manifestations to the principle. The result is not a simile but what one may call a simile reversed, if by that one refers to the creative process. The poet sees a beautiful sight and a human parallel—a human idea—strikes him, and its beauty surpasses itself because it is approached through Beauty. If the poet had started with the idea and resort to a simile to illustrate it, it would have lost its power or even become commonplace, no more than a platitude. The idea, however, arises spontaneously and naturally from the impact of the outward on the poet in a moment of inspiration; in a sudden flood of illumination; and so it carries conviction to us and has the power to stir us like a vision of our own. The prose-poems of Turgenev offer us an illustration of this method. In the fourth act of *Sakuntala* the moon is sinking and the sun is rising. By the simultaneous setting and rising of these two luminaries mankind is instructed, as it were, regarding its own vicissitudes of fortune. The poet grows thoughtful. We feel keenly with him why the two beauties cannot exist side by side, why one must necessarily exist apart from the other. It dawns upon us with the light of a discovery that, in the whole scheme of Nature, including the affairs of mankind, if there is a rise somewhere there must be a fall elsewhere. The truth of the poet's vision comes home to our bosom with the moving power of beauty. And this is the secret of Kalidasa's art in general and of his similes in particular.

* The translations from Sanskrit, when not otherwise indicated,
are by the author.

(☹)(😊)(😊)(😊)(😊)

Kālidāsa and Similes

<https://www.prekshaa.in/k%C4%81lid%C4%81sa-and-similes-part-1>

Kālidāsa is known as the master of similes. The Sanskrit tradition has proclaimed it as 'Upamā Kālidāsasya.' The variety, depth and appropriateness of his similes remains unsurpassed to this day. A study of his similes is itself an education in many branches of knowledge. Instead of confining ourselves strictly to the similes, we can look at the superset called *sādrśyamūlālankāra*. *Dr̥ṣṭānta* (Analogy) and *atiśayokti* (hyperbole) also fall into the same category. The following selection from his works will be a veritable treat to *rasikas*.

Meghadūtam

Despite being a short lyrical poem, the quality of similes in *Meghadūtam* is of a very high order. We can have a look at a few of them.

येन श्यामं वपुर् अतितरां कान्तिम् आपत्स्यते
ते बर्हेणेव स्फुरितरुचिना गोपवेषस्य विष्णोः ॥

The cloud with the rainbow across its dark grey body appears like Lord Krishna with a peacock feather on his head

रेवां द्रक्ष्यस्युपलविषमे विन्ध्यपादे विशीर्णा
भक्तिच्छेदैरिव विरचितां भूतिमङ्गे गजस्य ॥

The Amrakantak hill with river Narmada flowing down in multiple streams appears like a big elephant with its body painted in white stripes.

शिप्रावातः प्रियतम इव प्रार्थनाचाटुकारः ॥

The early morning breeze blowing over the river Shipra in Ujjain is like a lover flattering his loved one with requests to wake up.

एकं मुक्तागुणमिव भुवः स्थूलमध्येन्द्रनीलम् ॥

For the gods above, the river Charmanvati with the cloud above it, appears like a necklace of pearls adorned with an Indranīlamanī at the centre.

Raghuvamśam

This is the work where Kālidāsa reaches his zenith in terms of similes. In this work, he provides strikingly apt similes drawn from such diverse areas as mythology, agriculture, grammar, nature, scriptures, astrology, statecraft, and of course, day-to-day life. His mastery over each one of these branches is aptly represented by his similes. Beyond strict similes, he has given us some wonderful examples

of *dr̥ṣṭānta*, *utprekṣā* and *atiśayokti* also. They are all basically rooted in comparison like the simile. Hence, we shall include them also in our examples.

मन्दः कवियशः प्रार्थी
गमिष्याम्युपहास्यताम् ।
प्रांशुलभ्ये फले लोभाद्-
उद्धाहुरिव वामनः ॥

Me, the dullard, who is yearning for poetic fame will be made fun of just like a short man jumping to reach for a fruit hanging high up.

तं सन्तः श्रोतुमर्हन्ति
सदसद्व्यक्तिहेतवः ।
हेमः संलक्ष्यते ह्यग्नौ
विशुद्धिः श्यामिकापि वा ॥

This work (Raghuvamśam) shall be read by those who can differentiate between right and wrong. The purity or the lack of it in gold is determined only when it is subjected to fire.



भीमकान्तैर्नृपगुणैः
स भभूवोपजीविनाम् ।
अधृष्यश्चाभि गम्यश्च
याधोरत्नैरिवार्णवः ॥

King Dilīpa was welcoming as well as intimidating. He was intimidating for the immoral but welcoming for the needy. He was like the sea which is intimidating because of the dangerous animals that inhabit it but which is also welcoming because of the great riches it has inside.

इति विज्ञापितो राज्ञा
ध्यानस्तिमितलोचनः ।
क्षणमात्रम् ऋषिस्तस्थौ
सुप्तमीन इव हृदः ॥

Upon the king's request, sage Vasiṣṭha, with his eyes closed, sank into dhyāna for a moment. At that moment, he appeared as still as a pond whose fishes are sleeping.

स सेनां महतीं कर्षन्
पूर्वसागरगामिनीम् ।
बभौ हरजटाभ्रष्टां
गङ्गामिव भगीरथः ॥

King Raghu, leading his great army, appeared like King Bhagīratha leading the river Gaṅga towards the Eastern sea.

This simile is very appropriate because King Raghu will be heading towards the East on his conquest.

आपादपद्मप्रणताः
कलमा इव ते रघुम् ।
फलैः संवर्धयामासुर्-
उत्खातप्रतिर्षिताः ॥

They (the Vāṅgas), having submitted to Raghu and being reinstalled in their domains, bore rich fruits for Raghu. It was like displacing the tender rice sapling from one side of the paddy field into the other and reaping rich benefits.

This is an actual agricultural process and is very apt for the situation.

कामं नृपाः सन्तु सहरशोऽन्ये
राजन्वतीमाहुरनेन भूमिम् ।
नक्षत्रताराग्रहसंकुलापि
ज्योतिष्मती चन्द्रमसैव रात्रिः ॥

There may be many kings on earth. But only this king (Parantapa, king of Magadha) makes the earth feel proud. Even though there are numerous stars in the sky, the night feels bright only because of the moon.

सञ्चारिणी दीपशिखेव रात्रौ
यं यं व्यतीयाय पतिंवरा सा ।
नरेन्द्रमार्गादृ इव प्रपेदे
विवर्णभावं स स भूमिपालः ॥

In the svayaṃvara, as Indumati approached each king his face glowed with expectation and excitement. But as she moved on without choosing them, their faces became pale and dejected.

Kālidāsa compares this to the flame of a lamp passing through the main city-street, illuminating each home as it approaches it and leaving behind it in darkness as it

moves forward. For this brilliant simile, the Indian literary tradition fondly assigned him the honorific title 'Dīpaśikhā Kālidāsa.'

दृष्ट्या प्रसादामलया कुमारं
प्रत्यग्रहीत्संवरणस्रजेव ॥

Indumati accepted prince Aja with a pleasant twinkle in her eyes. It was as if her look itself had become the garland of marriage.

ता राघवं दृष्टिभिरापिबन्त्यो
नार्यो न जग्मुर्विषयान्तराणि ।
तथा हि शेषेन्द्रियवृत्तिरासां
सर्वात्मना चक्षुरिव प्रविष्टा ॥

When King Aja returned after marrying Indumati, the women of the city forgot everything else and lined up to gaze at him with unabashed admiration. It was as if all their other senses were invested in their eyes only.

अथ तस्य विवाहकौतुकं
ललितं बिभ्रत एव पार्थिवः ।
वसुधामपि हस्तगामिनीम्
अकरोदिन्दुमतीमिवापराम् ॥

Even as Aja was celebrating his marriage with Indumati, his father, King Raghu, handed over the kingdom to him as if he was handing over another Indumati.

अनुभूय वसिष्ठसंभृतैः
सलिलैस्तेन सहाभिषेचनम् ।
विशदोच्छ्वसितेन मेदिनी
कथयामास कृतार्थतामिव ॥

The sacred waters by which sage Vasiṣṭha performed the coronation of King Aja fell on to the ground. The aroma that arose from the ground was like the earth heaving its sigh of relief for having gotten Aja as the king.



Now, we shall see the reaction of Daśaratha to the curse pronounced by the blind father of Śravaṇakumāra, who gets killed by the king on a hunting mission. The curse was that Daśaratha would suffer separation from his son in his old age.

शापोऽप्यदृष्टनयाननपद्मशोभे
सानुग्रहो भगवता मयि पातितोऽयम् ।
कृष्यां दहन्नपि खलु क्षितिमिन्धनेद्धो
बीजप्ररोहजननीं ज्वलनः करोति ॥

“Revered sir, for me who has not been fortunate to have seen the lovely face of my own child so far, even this curse of yours is a blessing; at least now I’m sure to be blessed by a child. Your curse is like the forest fire which, despite burning the forest to ashes, only ends up making it fertile for another bloom.”

सा पौरान् पौरकान्तस्य
रामस्याभ्युदयश्रुतिः ।
प्रत्येकं ह्लादयां चक्रे
कुल्येवोद्यानपादपान् ॥

The news of Rama’s coronation brought immense joy to each one of his adoring citizens of Ayodhya. It was like a canal which waters the trees in the gardens, filling the water bund created for one tree before moving on to the other and so on and so forth.

This is also very apt – it essentially means that the citizens, overflowing with joy, spread the news from one to the other.

सा किलाश्वासिता चण्डी
भर्त्रा तत्संश्रुतौ वरौ ।
उद्वामेन्द्रसिक्ता भूर-
बिलमग्नाविवोरगौ ॥

The two wishes that the stubborn queen Kaikeyi extracted from Daśaratha were like two serpents emanating from their burrows after the rains.

To be noted is the aptness in mentioning the time – it is only after the rains that the snakes enjoy coming out. They will be closeted inside their burrows in the summer to avoid extreme heat.

इतस्ततश्च वैदेहीम्
अन्वेष्टुं भर्तृचोदिताः ।
कपयश्चैरुरार्तस्य
रामस्येव मनोरथाः ॥

Just like the grief-stricken Rāma's wandering thoughts, the army of monkeys sent forth by Sugrīva looked for Sītā in every place possible.

The aptness of this simile should not be missed. Just like there is no place out of reach of thoughts, there was no place that the monkeys did not reach.

मारुतिः सागरं तीर्णः संसारमिव निर्ममः ॥

Hanūmān prevailed over the perils of the sea just like a sage would prevail over the perils of life.

The depth and aptness of this simile cannot be overemphasized.

दृष्टा विचिन्वता तेन
लङ्कायां राक्षसीवृता ।
जानकी विषवल्लीभिः
परीतेव महौषधिः ॥

Hanūmān, looking for Sītā in Laṅkā, found her surrounded by rākṣasis. She appeared like a great medicinal plant surrounded by poisonous creepers.

प्रत्यभिज्ञानरत्नं च
रामायादर्शयत्कपी ।
हृदयं स्वयमायातं
वैदेह्या इव मूर्तिमत् ॥

The recognition-ring that Sītā had sent with Hanūmān was duly presented by Hanūmān to Rāma as if he had brought with him the very heart of Sītā.

निर्विष्टमुदधेः कूले
तं प्रपेदे विभीषणः ।
स्नेहाद्राक्षसलक्ष्म्येव
बुद्धिमादिश्य चोदितः ॥

While Rāma was camping on the sea-side on his way to Laṅkā, he was approached by Vibhīṣaṇa, the younger brother of Rāvaṇa. It was as if the patron-goddess of Laṅkā had intimately advised him to do it for his own good.

स सेतुं बन्धयामास
प्लवगैर्लवणाम्भसि ।
रसातलादिवोन्मग्नं
शेषं स्वप्राय शार्ङ्गिणः ॥

Rāma got a bridge built over the sea. It appeared as if the great serpent Ādiśeṣa had risen from under to facilitate the sleep of Lord Viṣṇu.

अकाले बोधितो भ्रात्रा
प्रियस्वप्नो वृथा भवान् ।
रामेषुभिरितीवासौ
दीर्घनिद्रां प्रवेशितः ॥

The arrows of Rāma sent mighty Kumbhakarṇa to eternal sleep as if telling him – “O sleep-loving Kumbhakarṇa, you were unduly woken up by your brother Rāvaṇa for no good reason.”

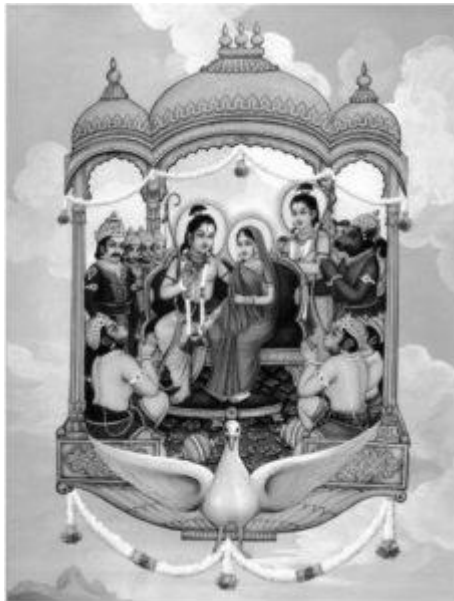
भुजमूर्धोरुबाहुल्याद्-
एकोऽपि धनदानुजः ।
ददृशे सोऽयथापूर्वो
मातृवंश इव स्थितः ॥

Because of his many arms, heads and legs, Rāvaṇa, though alone, appeared like the entire race of demons lined up.

Further, Kālidāsa describes the aerial view from the divine *puṣpakavimāna* when Rāma and Sītā are returning to Ayodhya after killing Rāvaṇa. Some of the similes served up in that section are worth mentioning.

वैदेहि! पश्यामलयाद् विभक्तं
मत्सेतुना फेनिलमम्बुराशिम् ।
छायापथेनेव शरत्प्रसन्नम्
आकाशमाविष्कृतचारुतारम् ॥

Sītā! Look at the bridge constructed by me; it divides the sea all the way from the Malayā (Sahyādri) mountain till Laṅkā. It appears to me like the Milky Way across a star-lit autumn night.



सैषा स्थली यत्र विचिन्वता त्वां
भ्रष्टं मया नूपुरमेकमुर्व्याम् ।

अदृश्यत त्वच्चरणारविन्द-
विश्लेषदुःखादिव बद्धमौनम् ॥

It was in this very place, while searching for you, that I found an anklet which had slipped off you. It appeared to me as if it was in distress at losing the company of your lotus feet and had hence gone quiet.

एतन्मुनेर्मानिनि शातकर्णेः
पञ्चाप्सरो नाम विहारवारि ।
आभाति पर्यन्तवनं विदूरान्
मेघान्तरालक्ष्यमिवेन्दुबिम्बम् ॥

Sītā! This is lake Pañcāpsara, surrounded by the forest on all sides, where the sage Śātakarṇi moves about. From this distance, it appears like the moon peeking from among the clouds.

छायाविनीताध्वपरिश्रमेषु
भूयिष्ठसंभाव्यफलेष्वमीषु ।
तस्यातिथीनामधुना सपर्या
स्थिता सुपुत्रेष्विव पादपेषु ॥

With sage Śarabhaṅga gone, the duty of welcoming and serving the guests is now vested in the trees of his hermitage, which bear fruits and provide shade, comforting the passers-by. It is like the duties of a father being owned up by his able sons.

The final simile in the *Rāmāyaṇa* section is also fascinating.

निर्वर्त्यैवं दशमुखशिरश्छेदकार्यं सुराणां
विष्वक्सेनः स्वतनुमविशत्सर्वलोकप्रतिष्ठाम् ।
लङ्कानाथं पवनतनयं चोभयं स्थापयित्वा
कीर्तिस्तम्भद्वयमिव गिरौ दक्षिणे चोत्तरे च ॥

Thus, having killed Rāvaṇa, Rāma dissolved himself into his original form. Before he went, he had established Hanūmān on the Himalayas, and Vibhīṣaṇa on the Trikūṭa hill in Laṅkā. They were like two victory towers proclaiming Rāma's greatness.

This simile is very apt because, in our tradition, Hanūmān and Vibhīṣaṇa are considered as immortals. And hence, this simile implies that Rāma's victory towers will be there for all time proclaiming his greatness.

We can conclude the *Raghuvamśam* fest with a couple of sobering similes from the description of the irresponsible king Agnivarṇa.

व्योम पश्चिमकलास्थितेन्दु वा
पङ्कशेषमिव घर्मपल्वलम् ।

